



Quality Assurance Bulletin

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Program Support Bureau

County of Los Angeles - Department of Mental Health
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AUTHORIZED REGISTERED NURSES

Per the Board of Registered Nursing, Title 16 California Code of Regulations Section 1474 and the California Business and Professions Code Section 2725, registered nursing scope of practice requires a standardized procedure (policy and protocol) be in place in order to allow Registered Nurses, including Nurse Practitioners and Clinical Nurse Specialists, to provide a mental health diagnosis. In the DMH System-of-Care, assessment and diagnosis go hand-in-hand. Therefore, a standardized procedure must be in place in order for Registered Nurses to complete any assessment in the DMH System-of-Care. The Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LAC-DMH) has opted to use the term "Authorized" to identify all Registered Nurses who have met the requirements of the Board of Registered Nursing to conduct assessments and provide mental health diagnoses in the DMH System-of-Care.

Effective September 15, 2013, the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LAC-DMH) policy 200.04 for Directly-Operated clinics established the standardized procedure and training requirements to allow Registered Nurses to become "Authorized" in the DMH System-of-Care. To be considered "Authorized", Directly-Operated Registered Nurses must have successfully completed the LAC-DMH mandatory formalized training on conducting a psychiatric diagnostic interview. Please refer to DMH Policy 200.04 for additional information regarding the timeframes for completing the training and the requirements of an Authorized Registered Nurse.

Contract agencies are responsible for ensuring that any staff member functioning as a Registered Nurse, including Nurse Practitioners and Clinical Nurse Specialists, successfully complete the requirements of a standardized procedure put into place by that agency, consistent with Board of Registered Nursing regulations, prior to conducting assessments and providing diagnoses (i.e. acting as an "Authorized" Registered Nurse).

LAC-DMH, as of the date of the Bulletin, has updated the Guide to Procedure Codes to refer to "Authorized" Registered Nurses, including Nurse Practitioners and Clinical Nurse Specialists, where appropriate.

Please refer to the updated Guide to Procedure Codes for Claiming Mental Health Services for a complete list and description of available procedure codes and disciplines:
http://dmh.lacounty.gov/wps/portal/dmh/admin_tools/prov_manuals

If Contract or Directly-Operated agencies have any questions regarding this Bulletin, please contact your Service Area QA Liaison.

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